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Two charged after armed robbery in Minden

Haliburton Highlands OPP are investigating an armed robbery that took place on Thursday afternoon in Minden.

According to an OPP press release, on Jan. 20, shortly before 1:30 p.m., Haliburton Highlands OPP responded to a report of a robbery at a residence on Parkside Street in Minden. The suspects were located a short time later, with the assistance of City of Kawartha Lakes OPP officers, and arrested without incident. A firearm was recovered.

As a result of the investigation, a 39-year-old woman and 55-year-old man, both of Minden Hills, have been charged with:

- Robbery using firearm
- Assault
- Possession of weapon for dangerous purpose
- Unauthorized possession of a firearm
- Possession of schedule 1 substance-cocaine

Both accused were scheduled to appear for a bail hearing before the Ontario Court of Justice in Lindsay, on Jan. 21.

There are no concerns for public safety at this time.

Anyone with information that could assist with this investigation is asked to call Haliburton Highlands OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or 705 286-1431. Should you wish to remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or submit a secure web-tip at www.khcrimestoppers.com where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward.

- Staff



Oh, baby!

Aran Kim Nair was born a week early, on Jan. 10, making him one of the first Haliburton County residents to be born in 2022. Welcoming him into the world are parents Jennifer Kim and Praveen Venugopal and the community of Gelert. For more on Aran's arrival and the Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft, see Page 11. /Photo by Eleanor Dobbins

County schools reporting absence rates of 16% or higher

by SUE TIFFIN
Times Editor

One week after staff and students returned to in-person learning at schools, schools

across Haliburton County were reporting absence rates of 16 to 58 per cent.

While the Ministry of Education is no longer reporting on positive cases of COVID-19 in the staff and student population, as of Jan. 24, combined percentages of staff and stu-

dent absences are being reported at ontario.ca/page/covid-19-school-closures-and-absenteeism. The absences could include those that are not related to COVID-19, including medical appointments or due to religious

see ABSENCE page 8

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Health unit shifting the strategy for handling COVID-19

Dashboard case counts to give way to wastewater, hospital admission data

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

Health officials are ushering in a “paradigm shift” in how COVID-19 is managed and the health unit will have to work closely with several community groups to help them understand broad changes, said the region’s top doctor.

In a lengthy report to the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit board, medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking spoke about how the Omicron variant has led to changes on how the health unit will measure the threat of the virus and actions that are being made to help schools and long-term homes operate with a sense of normalcy.

“It’s helping to not necessarily normalize COVID-19, but handle it in a way that doesn’t disrupt core activities” she said, during the Jan. 20 health board meeting, held virtually.

Bocking said that watching daily case counts on the health unit’s dashboard will no longer be the best way to get an accurate sense of how present COVID-19 is in the community. The new Omicron variant is so infectious that health care workers are now focussing their efforts on controlling the illness in high-risk settings. That means the general public has limited access to lab-confirmed testing, and dashboard numbers won’t reflect the actual numbers. Those who test positive with a home-based kit, or are showing symptoms and are assumed to have

COVID are being asked to follow isolation guidelines on their own and inform close contacts themselves.

Bocking said the number of hospital admissions are now a better way to gauge the prevalence of COVID.

The health unit is also inspecting wastewater to get a sense of how prevalent COVID is in the region.

She said that technology is being used at two wastewater lines – one in Cobourg, the other in Lindsay – because when a person has COVID, they ultimately release some of its genetic material in their fluids. The technology filters water and looks for the genetic material that is consistent with COVID-19.

“We call it wastewater signal data,” Bocking said. “It’s not very specific; it does not tell us who has COVID. But it does match well with overall increased cases. When it starts to come down, cases come down as well.”

There are other signs that the Omicron variant is waning. Bocking said that the test positivity rate, as of Wednesday, Jan. 19, was declining. However, the strain on hospitals is still noticeable. In the two previous weeks, there had been 21 hospital admissions in the region, due to COVID.

COVID is also still a concern in long-term care homes, she added, explaining that there had been three long-term care related deaths in the previous two weeks. However, she said that number pales in comparison to what was seen in the first wave of COVID in 2020, and now most cases being observed in long-term care homes involve residents showing mild

symptoms.

“We are, on the other hand, hearing concerns about strict measures,” she said, referring to Ontario’s recent move to ban visitors to long-term care home and resident outings for social purposes.

“We’re working with our partners to talk about how we can have a balanced approach to that. This is a tricky balance, it requires a paradigm shift.”

Bocking also spoke about the need to educate parents about a shift in strategy on keeping schools open safely.

She said the health unit will no longer track each individual case of COVID at schools and inform parents when there’s a close contact in their child’s class. Instead, public health’s strategy for schools will shift to ensuring better masks are provided, better ventilation is in place and promoting vaccines for school-aged children.

“We are working closely with school boards to talk about how we can help them,” she said.

She said the constantly changing nature of public health work is leading to “burnout” and officials have to be mindful of the health of their own staff, adding that stories such as protests at public health offices have been detrimental for morale.

Bocking’s report triggered much discussion among the board, as there are still unanswered questions, such as whether a fourth vaccine dose will soon be recommended and the question of when life might get back to normal.

“There’s not one answer to that ... it will

be a process,” Bocking said, addressing the question of how the pandemic might end.

She said that officials need to see the impact of easing restrictions a little at a time. They can look at wastewater data, hospital admissions and daily case counts to do that.

“We don’t want to loosen everything at once and then see an increase,” she said.

COVID-19 data collected in Minden wastewater last year

Minden also had a wastewater monitoring site in place last summer.

“Wastewater treatment plants in Lindsay and Cobourg (the two largest urban centres in the health unit region) were selected as the main testing sites,” Dr. Natalie Bocking of the HKPR health unit told the *Times*. “However, due to the increased traffic through Minden from out-of-town visitors during the summer months, the decision was made to set up one monitoring site in Minden last summer. In October 2021, monitoring was moved to Cobourg.” The last time a wastewater sample was collected from the Minden site was Oct. 8, 2021.

“Surveillance at the Minden plant found an observable increase in COVID-19 signatures on July 26, Aug. 31, Sept. 2 and 28, and Oct. 1, 2021,” Bocking told the *Times*.

Snowmobilers asked to stay off closed trails



Area residents and visitors are being asked to be patient and stay off local Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) trails that remain closed.

The Haliburton Highlands detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police issued a press release on Jan. 19 noting the need to wait for trails to be opened.

“Riders who choose to ignore the closed trail signs or attempt to go around closed gates are placing themselves, club volunteers and the local OFSC club at risk,” reads the press release. “Riding these trails before they are opened can cause damage to private property and may result in loss of riding opportunities in the area.”

Members of the Haliburton Highlands OPP were conducting enforcement last week and charging riders found to be using closed trails.

“Riding on unavailable trails sets us back in the preparation process,” said John Enright, Haliburton County Snowmobile Association president. “We are concerned

about on trail hazards, such as rocks and logs and you may be trespassing. A snowmobile trail requires a safety audit, which involves checking signage and potential hazards before it can open safely. Most trails here are on private property. All gates and barriers are closed for a reason. Please let your local club make arrangements to open any gate. A snowmobile trail is an un-engineered product, which changes rapidly and frequently due to terrain, weather, and club grooming cycles. Be aware, ride safely.”

Please check the OFSC website to ensure trails are available and passable www.ofsc.on.ca/trail-maps/. More information is also available through the Haliburton County Snowmobile Association website at hcsa.ca.

– Staff



Happy trails

The Haliburton County Snowmobile Association is welcoming riders to enjoy a day on available trails. Southbound B103 near the Howland Junction bridge, a trail shown here, is currently open. Visit hcsa.ca for more information.

/Submitted by the HCSA

Seven new cases of COVID-19, one hospitalization

Seven new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County were reported by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit on Jan. 24. One new hospitalization has been added to the report. The update includes information from Jan. 21, and is also an underestimate of community spread due to provincial testing guidance which has resulted in only individuals working or living in high-risk settings being tested. /Screenshot from the HKPRD health unit

COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by County							
County	Current Cases Not Resolved	Current Probable Cases	Confirmed Cases (Total to date)	Confirmed Cases Resolved (Total to date)	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Confirmed Deaths (Total to date)	Probable Deaths (Total to date)
Haliburton	17	0	327	309	5	1	0
Kawartha Lakes	239	2	2,782	2,492	84	51	13
Northumberland	139	1	2,654	2,495	65	20	0
Pending Information	0	0	19	19	0	0	0
Total	395	3	5,782	5,315	154	72	13

MOH recommending boosters, especially for seniors

by **SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

The following are brief reports from a Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit press conference with medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking, held virtually on Jan. 19 and press releases from the public health unit.

A press release issued by Bocking last Friday urged residents to get their COVID-19 vaccine booster if they had not done so yet. She noted that in the first 19 days of the new year, there have been seven deaths due to COVID-19 - six of these individuals were 65 years of age and older, and only one of the six individuals had received a booster dose, with some being unvaccinated.

"A booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine greatly improves protection against the Omicron variant compared to just two doses (or one or none)," said Bocking. "Boosters reduce your risk of serious illness from Omicron and lessen the chance you will end up in hospital or the ICU. If you are 65 years of age or older, you're more vulnerable to COVID-19, so an extra dose of protection is needed now."

Bocking said that while the uptake of COVID-19 booster doses has been strong, interest is starting to level off.

"This is worrisome and requires a call to arms," she said. "If you are a senior with only two doses, please get your third. If you have an older family member or loved one who is not fully protected, encourage and support them to get a booster dose. Vaccines remain the best way to slow the spread of Omicron and ease the pressure on the health care system."

Anyone 50 years old or older who needs a first, second or booster dose of vaccine is now able to walk into any vaccination clinic between 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Appointments can also be booked online at www.ontario.ca/bookvaccine or by phone at 1-833-943-3900. For clinic dates and locations, rides to a clinic site and other information, visit www.hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577, ext. 5020.

Balancing COVID-19 and isolation risks

The health unit has issued revised, interim guidance on when residents of area long-term care and retirement homes need to isolate in a COVID-19 outbreak.

"This comes amid rising concerns about the increased risk to the physical and mental health of residents who have been placed in isolation if their long-term care facility or retirement home has been declared in outbreak," reads a press release issued Jan. 19.

While public health units follow provincial guidance for case, contact and outbreak management of COVID-19, there

is some discretion to adapt these to unique situations in their local regions, reads the press release. The interim health unit guidance includes directions for facilities with cases identified only among staff, as well as updated recommendations on testing and isolation for residents at homes with suspect outbreaks. The change could allow residents to be released from isolation sooner if certain requirements are met.

"These changes are meant to strike a balance between the negative impacts of strict outbreak measures, like isolation, and the continuing need to protect older residents from COVID-19," said Bocking. "COVID-19 has changed from the first wave, meaning we also need to change our response. At this point in the pandemic, most residents of long-term care and retirement homes are highly vaccinated. We're also seeing less illness and transmission of COVID-19 in these facilities. While there is an obligation to protect those most vulnerable to the virus, we know that strict isolation measures can also negatively affect residents."

Reaching a peak

"Are we starting to peak, is this starting to level off in terms of activity with this wave of Omicron?," said Bocking. "I do think it's too early to say for our region. A couple of things that are looking promising ... our test positivity has come down, which I think is one of the indicators that we can look at. The number of outbreaks that are being newly declared each day has slowed. We were at several days where we were seeing several outbreaks being declared and this seems to be slowing a little bit. I think we can also look to neighbouring jurisdictions and what's happening in other areas of the province."

Bocking said the HKPRD region is about a week behind neighbouring jurisdictions.

"As a more rural region, it takes a little bit longer for us to start to see wider spread of COVID-19 activity so we don't tend to peak or plateau at the same time as some of these other jurisdictions. But we know as we watch their trends that we will be following soon as well."

Bocking said there were promising indicators that suggested we were reaching a peak in the fifth wave, noting that modelling had predicted that by the end of January that was a possibility.

"Too soon to tell for sure, but I do think we have reason to have some optimism and looking forward to coming out on the other side of this wave," she said.

By the numbers

Since the start of the pandemic, the region has confirmed 5,366 cases of COVID-19 in residents. At the time of the briefing, there were 349 lab-confirmed active cases, and the

seven-day incident rate was decreased to about 254.8 cases per 100,000 people, which Bocking acknowledged was an underestimate of the broader activity level of COVID-19 infection due to a change in testing guidelines which limited general population access to PCR tests.

"I don't think we know for sure whether or not the decrease in that weekly incidence rate, how much is just an underestimate as a result of the change to PCR testing, and how much might be a reflection of starting to see a plateau," said Bocking.

The test positivity rate had decreased, and was recorded at 13.3 per cent, the highest recorded having been about 22 per cent.

In the past 14 days at the time of briefing, 1,078 cases of COVID-19 have been reported. About 19 per cent of those cases were identified in those among the 20-to-29 age group, and 16 per cent were among the 30-to-39 age group. In the past two weeks there have been 21 admissions to hospital related to COVID-19, two of those were residents of long-term care homes, 11 were among individuals that were not vaccinated - about 52 per cent - and 17 of those hospital admissions among individuals aged 70 and over.

"[There's] more severe illness resulting in hospital admission largely among older populations, certainly a risk of higher risk of several outcomes for those individuals not vaccinated, and certainly some risk with two doses of vaccine and that decreases even further with a booster dose of vaccine," said Bocking.

Five people had been admitted to ICU in the past two weeks, three of those people were unvaccinated.

Six deaths have occurred in the past two weeks, three were residents at long-term care homes. Of those deaths, three were individuals who were not vaccinated, two had had two doses of vaccine while one person who had received their booster shot. Five of the deaths were individuals aged 70 and over.

GO-VAXX bus returns

The GO-VAXX bus is once again rolling into the area but individuals who wish to be vaccinated must book their bus appointment in advance. Appointments can be booked starting at 8 a.m. the day before the mobile clinic at the website noted at the beginning of this article, or by calling 1-833-943-3900.

Clinics will run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Three stops are scheduled for Haliburton County:

- Saturday, Jan. 29 - A.J. LaRue Arena, 728 Mountain St, Haliburton
- Saturday, Feb. 5 - Lloyd Watson Community Centre, 2249 Loop Rd, Wilberforce
- Saturday, Feb. 12 - A.J. LaRue Arena, 728 Mountain St, Haliburton



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(VIRTUAL) COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted virtually via web conference meetings, until further notice. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The schedule of upcoming meetings are:

January 27 – Regular Council Meeting
February 10 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by joining a live-stream link available on the township website at www.mindenhill.ca/council/ or by using the direct link provided in the notice. Meeting agendas are not displayed during the meeting, please download by visiting our website at www.mindenhill.ca/council/.

Please note the live-stream link provided for each meeting will only be activated while Council is in session.

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We are currently looking to fill a variety of positions within the Township. Many opportunities include benefits such as enrollment in a comprehensive benefit package, Employee Assistance Plan, life insurance, personal health coverage, OMERS pension plan, vacation, float and sick time entitlements as well as opportunities for training and development. Please visit our website at www.mindenhill.ca/employment-opportunities/ or email sprentice@mindenhill.ca for a list of available jobs and how to apply.

WINTER SAND

Winter sand is now available at the upper parking lot of the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Community Centre, by the Skate Park. Please note this is for Individual Use Only – No Commercial Users please.

WASTE REDUCTION TIP

Electronic Waste such as old televisions, computers, monitors, etc. is accepted at the Scotchline Waste Disposal Site and Recycling Centre free of charge. For more information on recycling in Minden Hills, download the Haliburton County Waste Wizard mobile app on your Apple or Android device.

MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

Will be held on Monday, October 24, 2022.

The Township of Minden Hills will be offering three different ways to vote in the 2022 Municipal Election.

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Watch for more information and updates as it becomes available on our website at www.mindenhill.ca.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

It only takes a few measures to prevent a grease fire.

- Do not leave your cooking unattended.
- Do not fry frozen food in oil.
- Do not rush deep frying, the oil needs to heat slowly.
- Keep flammable items like oven mitts, towels, and curtains away from the cooking area.
- Store heavy lids and cookie sheets near the stove to use in case of a grease fire.

Working group to form around green burial initiative

by **NICK BERNARD**
Times Staff

The following are brief reports from an Algonquin Highlands regular council meeting held virtually on Jan. 20.

Council has agreed to form an ad hoc committee to collaborate with the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society to convert a section of the cemetery at St. Stephen's Church into a green burial site.

Green burials do not include the use of embalming chemicals or use cement vaults, rather using biodegradable shrouds, coffin-shaped baskets, or unfinished wooden coffins.

The site at St. Stephen's was first proposed in 2020, but at the time, council wished to strengthen its working relationship with the Green Burial Society before agreeing to create any sort of working group. Mayor Carol Moffatt says that has since changed, as the municipality has come a long way in its decision making, and the Green Burial Society has improved its network and information base for the green burial process.

"I think part of the challenge before was that there was a bit of a misalignment in terms of priorities and workloads for staff," Moffatt said. "The society has come a long way, we know that there's tremendous interest in green burials, we have committed to the section at St. Stephen's, so we're in a different place now."

Moffatt also said the initiative will be on hold temporarily until Algonquin Highlands can hire a new public works manager, but that she supported the working group's creation once the vacancy is filled.

The working group will assist in the design of green burial plots, as well as the beautification of the designated area within the cemetery at St. Stephen's.

More information on the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society can be found at <https://www.haliburton-greenburial.ca/>.

Hazardous waste events to continue, more volumetric data needed

Public works environmental co-ordinator Melissa Murray discussed the township's 2022 hazardous waste collection events, which have been held in conjunction with Minden Hills, Dysart et al, and Highlands East.

Five dates and locations were chosen for Algonquin Highlands' 2022 events:

- May 21 – Maple Lake Landfill – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- June 25 – Dorset Transfer Station – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Aug. 6 – Oxtongue Lake Landfill – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sept. 10 – Dorset Transfer Station – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Oct. 8 – Maple Lake Landfill – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

In the report, Murray's staff expressed concern over the increasing costs of holding these events counter to the number of people attending them, especially in Oxtongue Lake, which only saw 25 participants compared to upwards of 100-150 participants observed elsewhere.

According to Murray, each event costs \$2,500, up from \$1,200 in 2021. The gulf in cost was a concern to her staff, who requested the discussion from council on how to proceed.

Ultimately, council decided to go ahead with the five dates as planned, while committing to increased promotion of each event, as well as observing the amount of waste

being moved at each location to help inform the decision-making process for 2023.

"Spend the extra dollars, keep an eye on it, promote it more, and see if there's a difference," Mayor Carol Moffatt said in summary. "If the tonnage [of waste] increases, then that's a win, and we can justify ... that it was worth doing."

Household hazardous waste includes car batteries, propane cylinders, cleaners, oils, and more. Specialized collection of these materials keeps them out of landfills.

More information on the hazardous waste collection events can be found at algonquinhighlands.ca/household-hazardous-waste-events.php

Dailloux set to represent municipality on climate advisory group

Algonquin Highlands councillor Jennifer Dailloux was appointed to represent Algonquin Highlands as part of the County of Haliburton's Community Climate Action Plan Advisory Group.

"By gosh and golly, you're appointed," Mayor Carol Moffatt said as she confirmed Dailloux's nomination.

The group will meet four times over the course of 2022, with the goal of helping and advising staff in developing a climate action plan for the County of Haliburton. The advisory group will review best practices related to such action plans, identify strategies for communities to reduce emissions, and help prepare municipalities for the direct impacts of climate change.

Dailloux has been an outspoken and enthusiastic proponent for climate action within Algonquin Highlands, and went unopposed during the nomination process.

Council stays 'on the right side' of responsibilities

by **NICK BERNARD**
Times Staff

Integrity Commissioner Harold Elston made his last report to Algonquin Highlands council during their meeting on Jan. 20, ahead of the municipal election set for later this year. In his report, Elston outlined his activities since his appointment in March 2019, and his recommendations for council ahead of October's municipal election.

It is the function of the integrity commissioner to advise mayor, council, and other appointees on the policies and procedures that govern ethical behavior within the government.

As commissioner, Elston is also responsible for investigating breaches in the various codes of conduct council adheres to. Elston reported that, in Algonquin Highlands, he had received only one request for inquiry, concerning a resident's lease for his airport hangar. Overall, one of the most frequent topics he's received inquiries for have involved anonymous complaints and closed meetings, relaying advice he's given to other jurisdictions.

"As municipal councils in Ontario finish the third year of this term and start in on the final leg, I am sensing a certain level of fatigue setting in," Elston's report said, characterizing his interactions with municipalities across Ontario over the past term, including Algonquin Highlands. "It may be that the excitement and enthusiasm that greeted the beginning of the session has been subdued by the long hours, late nights and seemingly endless important issues that you are called upon to consider and deal with. The fact that most of your term has been in the midst of a pandemic has certainly con-

tributed to any feelings of exhaustion and discontent."

Elston's presentation to council included a detailed walk-through of the council's roles and responsibilities, their codes of conduct, and a summary of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, which addresses how councillors are required to address such conflicts of interest.

"Everything we talk about – whether it's conflicts or relations with staff, or just conduct during a council meeting – all goes to maintaining [the] public trust," Elston said. "At the end of the day, folks ... have to think that, those five, six people that are making the decisions ... they're doing it in the public interest, not their own private interest."

The presentation also covered a social media policy, which forbids councillors from promoting any third-party events, products, and services. The policy also forbids the promotion of any particular political party or candidate at any level, as well as criticism of municipal staff.

Algonquin Highlands mayor Carol Moffatt called the presentation valuable, saying it's important for council to have access to its integrity commissioner to keep council informed of its responsibilities.

"It helps us stay on the right side," she said. "This is a confusing and complicated process – even trying to explain some of the conflicts can be a challenge, and this job isn't as easy as many believe it to be ... the complexities lie exactly in ... ensuring the protection of the integrity of the office and the public's trust."

Elston's report also reviewed the rules around the municipal election, and offered advice to councillors that are seeking re-election.

"Whether it was your first term or your tenth, you have undoubtedly learned much about your community, its issues and its residents," Elston concludes. "If you feel you have made mistakes or have regrets, remember that these experiences serve to make you a better Member of Council and a stronger leader. Science tells us that there is a causal connection between failure and future success. As Nietzsche said: 'What does not kill me makes me stronger.'"

Elston's report, as well as his accompanying PowerPoint presentation, is available on the Algonquin Highlands civic portal at algonquinhighlands.civicweb.net/

The full Jan. 20 meeting of Algonquin Highlands council is available to view on YouTube.





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County to hire consultant for economic development strategy

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

Haliburton County plans to hire a consultant to work on an economic development strategy; a project that would involve interviewing community members and gathering data to ensure business in the region will grow.

A report to county council by new economic development and tourism director Scott Ovell seemed to excite councillors at the Jan. 12 meeting, held virtually. Council approved the report, which asked that a request for proposal be sent out to interested consulting firms. The cost for the contract could range between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

"I'm ecstatic; this can't happen soon enough," said Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin.

Highlands East Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall said, "this is an awesome attitude here" and asked that the work put a focus on solving the problem of a shortage of skilled labour in the area.

The RFP would ask the winning firm to have its people attend meetings with a steering committee, prepare and facilitate an on-line survey to collect public input and host six industry roundtables with economic development leaders.

It would also ask the consultant to "document, analyze, summarize and prepare recommendations based on input collected through the consultation process."

The firm would also be asked to meet certain "deliverables" including "creating

a vision for economic development," establishing strategic priorities and drafting a five-year economic development department budget.

Ovell's report sparked discussion about

the need for Haliburton County to find new ways to provide jobs and more education opportunities for its citizens, as well as better housing options.

Ovell said the point of the plan is to look at

"big picture ideas" and see "what tools are in our tool box" to address business concerns, including what different groups the county can partner with.



A bingo for the Red Wolves

Proceeds from Canoe FM's weekly radio bingo nights are supporting another local group in town - the Haliburton County Red Wolves. Canoe FM's Ron Murphy, from left and Roxanne Casey presented a cheque for \$2,500 to Yvette Brauer and Tracey Pratt, co-ordinators of the Red Wolves team. /NICK BERNARD Staff

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IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

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Letters to the Editor must be signed and include phone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Email must include name and phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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Freedom

THIS WEEK marks the anniversary of the time Canada's first confirmed COVID-19 case was reported in Toronto in 2020, and this upcoming Sunday will mark two years since Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern.

"At the time, there were fewer than 100 cases and no deaths reported outside China," said Ghebreyesus. "Two years later, almost 350 million cases have been reported, and more than 5.5 million deaths – and we know these numbers are an underestimate. Last week, 100 cases were reported every three seconds, and somebody lost their life to COVID-19 every 12 seconds."

While Ghebreyesus notes that we will be living with COVID for the foreseeable future, he also stresses that that shouldn't mean we accept a high number of deaths "from a preventable and treatable disease," that we do not "accept an unacceptable burden on our health systems," or that we "ignore the consequences of long COVID, which we don't yet fully understand." He said it's dangerous to assume that Omicron will be the last variant of the virus, or that we are in the end days of the pandemic. Instead, he said this week, "ending the acute phase of the pandemic must remain our collective priority."

We don't feel to be moving forward in a collective right now.

What brought us together at the time the pandemic was first declared was our focus on helping each other despite the communal sacrifices we would have to make. We all agreed we should protect the vulnerable – especially the elderly, the disabled, those with underlying conditions – in any way we could, and that we should protect those working on the frontlines, especially those in the healthcare sector. Remember the hearts and rainbows on windows, the clanging of pots out of doors, the reminder for empathy with sentiments like, "we're all in the same boat but not the same storm"? While

since then most of us have worn masks, and then better masks; received vaccines, and then more vaccines; and continued to sometimes put our lives outside the home on hold in an attempt to do what we can to help, nothing has actually changed regarding our need to focus on our sense of humanity – pandemic or no pandemic.

And yet this week has been hard for many. Regardless of what you think about why someone might be raising their voice in protest, even if you don't agree with the message, it is frustrating when people do not know how to organize well or do so in a way that is harmful to others. There are ways first in which you can raise concerns, usually going through a process of steps to challenge a decision or policy, or lack thereof. We have all had the opportunity to learn from those whose lives are actually at stake, who

have taken to the street to say 'no more.' They don't go to people's homes. They don't make people feel more worried than they already are about sending their kids to school. They don't disrupt the important work happening at hospitals. They don't intend to purposefully divide, to make personal attacks about a person rather than a system. They want

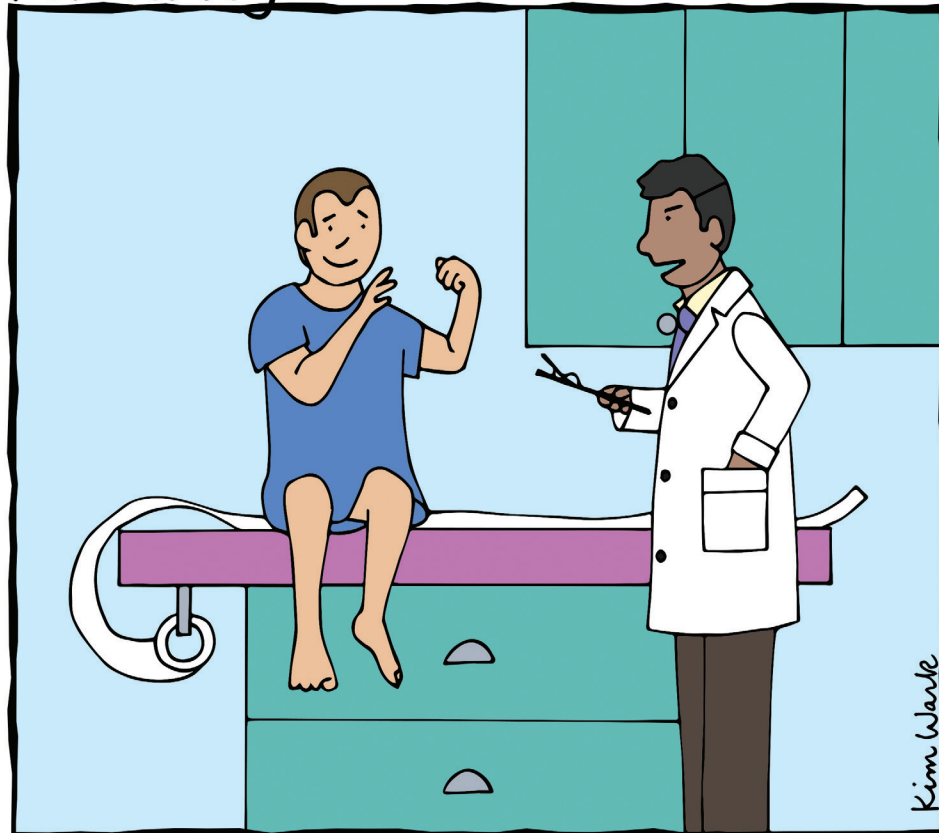
the same rights and treatment as others, and in speaking up for themselves, they lift others up. They cause us all to rise up.

While there are restrictions in place, they really are the bare minimum that we can do to protect each other, to live in a community with each other. Wear a mask to protect others. Get vaccinated to protect others. If you can't or you don't want to, that doesn't mean you aren't free – most would suggest you're quite free to choose whether or not you want to get a vaccine for example, which is why you might be unvaccinated right now.

If you have the energy so many of us are lacking right now to be spreading a message, consider that message. Think about what you're doing or saying, what you're spreading on social media, what you're applauding or supporting – and how it's helping our community and those we once collectively agreed to protect.

**SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

Kwarky



"Must you explain your symptoms in charades?"

Drag shows

THE OTHER day, I overheard a TV commercial talking about a "drag show" and I thought, "Heck, it's about time."

After all, watching people drag their sleds across the lake is often the most entertaining parts of ice fishing. I have no doubt it will make for compelling television.

Anyone who had ever watched a 130-pound man drag an ice sled loaded with 240 pounds worth of gear knows exactly what I am talking about. This is something that you just can't take your eye off of. Especially, if the lake's surface is slushy or if the snow is knee-deep.

This act of dragging an ice fishing sled has everything a viewer would want. There is the slapstick comedy that occurs when the sled tips over at the end of the downhill slide to the ice. There is the deadpan look on the angler's face when he realizes that his power auger fell off the sled 100 yards ago. There is also just the right amount of suspense. Will the angler dragging the sled see the open, boot-sized, drilled hole he's walking straight towards? Will he slip multiple times on that patch of glare ice just ahead?

Add to that a generous helping of drama. Is the angler going to make it all the way to good fishing grounds or will he just stop, ponder the futility of life and refuse to go on? And what about all that wheezing and sweating? What does it mean? And let's not forget the life-or-death drama and the heroic, action-packed moments that occur when an angler has to rescue two dozen helpless minnows that just spilled out of an overturned bait bucket.

Don't even get me started about the associated dialogue. That stuff writes itself.

Frankly, it comes as no surprise that the television networks finally realized ice fishing is ready for prime time.

To be honest, I wouldn't mind consulting on an episode or two.

I have already started to rough out one show about a fellow who tries to set up a large ice fishing pop-up tent on a very windy day. And another where the stars of the show try to determine whether the smell in the ice hut is highly toxic or just another sign that the other angler's floatation suit needs a good washing. Spoiler alert: a three-part storyline on nasal icicles is also in the works.

I suppose, all this shows just how far ice fishing has progressed as an outdoors sport. In the old days, dragging out a sled was child's play. That's basically because the average sled contained a minnow bucket, a ladle, a spud or hand auger, a folding chair, and a couple of spools of fishing

line, some hooks, split shot, and a few willow gads. On a prolonged expedition you would add a thermos and a frozen sandwich.

These days, you're not equipped unless you are dragging a sled with a pop-up tent that could house a family of eight, rubber flooring, a heater, a portable stove, a cooking set, sonar unit, underwater camera and flasher, a power auger, shovels, a bucketful of rods, several tackle boxes, a bait bucket, folding chairs and a cooler full of food to cook, as well as several thermoses – and then another sled carrying all the camera gear for your social media posts.

And that can be a real drag.

**STEVE GALEA**
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Hooked on SVU

I HAVE A confession to make: I am an addict. Not tobacco. Not drugs. Not alcohol. I'm addicted to a television show.

It's odd, because I've never particularly liked television. Too many annoying commercials. I mean how many times can you watch some bozo telling a client that his competitor's car mats are not as good as his butter tarts?

I think he said butter tarts. Maybe he said his car mats. I'm not positive because when the commercials start, I turn off my hearing aids.

At any rate, I am addicted to a TV show.

It's a cop shop show. Not your typical bad guy, good guy, shoot'em up drama. It's an artful ongoing drama that shows cops as human beings and often carries a message about life today.



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

Law and Order: Special Victims Unit is the longest running live-action primetime series in American television history. It recently surpassed 500 episodes and I've seen most of them.

I love the show because it dramatizes the ugliest sides of human nature while recording the toll that ugliness takes on law enforcement people. It has serial rape, pedophilia, unthinkable crimes against the disabled and elderly, and sexual crimes most of

us cannot imagine.

While telling these awful stories SVU gets viewers thinking about issues such as racism, gender identity, sexual preferences and equality rights. Many episodes are taken from real life crimes.

The acting is consistently sharp with detectives like Odafin "Fin" Tutuola (Ice-T) and John Munch (Richard Belzer) providing one-liners and acerbic wit that help lighten the heaviness of the crimes they encounter.

The premier star of the show unquestionably is Mariska Hargitay, who plays Olivia Benson who over 23 seasons has risen through the detective ranks to become captain of the Special Victims Unit. She is an uncompromising detective with a compassionate side often seen in her deep brown eyes.

Hargitay, 57, had a tragic past, as do many of the young victims in SVU. She is the daughter of Jayne Mansfield, the 1950s - 60s blonde bombshell celebrity killed in a car crash in 1967. Mariska was in the car with her mother and was injured but survived and was raised by her father, former Mr. Universe Mickey Hargitay.

Acting as Olivia Benson on SVU has had an impact on Hargitay's personal life. Benson is a strong advocate for sexual abuse victims and in real life Hargitay has become a trained counsellor for rape victims.

She has received much fan mail seeking autographs but over the years more letters came from women sharing their stories of sexual abuse. These moved her to form the Joyful Heart Foundation, which says its mission is "to transform society's response to sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse, support survivors' healing, and end this violence forever."

What makes SVU better than other cop shows is its attention to life issues linked to crime. For instance, the traumas caused by mental illnesses are shown in an SVU episode in which a bipolar disorder lands the daughter of SVU Detective Elliot Stabler (Christopher Meloni) in jail.

The only way to save the teenage daughter from a long prison term is to show a judge and jury that she has a serious bipolar disorder inherited from her grandmother Bernadette Stabler, played by veteran actress Ellen Burstyn. It is an outstanding show that provides information on a serious disorder, which can be controlled if diagnosed early and properly treated.

Past episodes of SVU run on a couple of different channels and I tape them. That way I fast forward through those annoying commercials, which take up roughly one-third of the show's airtime.

Taping past episodes makes it difficult to follow the SVU timeline. Tonight I might see an episode from 2004 and tomorrow one from 2018. The characters change over the years but I manage to keep track of who's who and what's happening to them.

I like to think SVU is great because of a Canadian connection. Ted Kotcheff, a long-time SVU director and producer, was born in Toronto, graduated in English literature from the University of Toronto and early in his career was the youngest director on the staff of CBC.



January decor

Snow and ice gather near Big Hawk Lake Rd./Photo by Guenter Horst

letters to the editor

Beautiful lights in the dark

To the Editor,

They're coming ... I can hear them ... and I run to the window and see the lights and I feel a sense of calm. I'm going to be 68-years-old and yes ... I still run to the window to see those beautiful lights in the dark on Hwy 35.

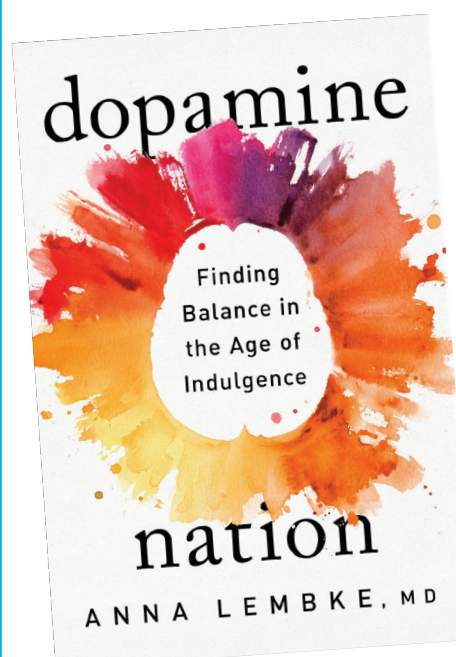
They are taking care of us, making sure we are

safe to drive to the grocery store, to work etc. in the morning. Yes, it is a sense of calm and I say quietly, thank you. I do not take you for granted and yes, you are keeping us safe.

In case you are not told enough, I thank you.

Jeri-Lyn Cuda
Minden

HCPL's Non-fic Pick - January



In *Dopamine Nation*, Dr. Anna Lembke, psychiatrist and author, explores the exciting new scientific discoveries that explain why the relentless pursuit of pleasure leads to pain ... and what to do about it.

We're living in a time of unprecedented access to high-reward, high-dopamine stimuli: drugs, food, news, gambling, shopping, gaming, texting, sexting, Facebooking, Instagramming, YouTubeing, tweeting.

The increased numbers, variety, and potency is staggering. The smartphone is the modern-day hypodermic needle, delivering digital dopamine 24/7 for a wired generation, leaving us vulnerable to compulsive overconsumption.

Condensing complex neuroscience into easy-to-understand metaphors, Lembke illustrates how finding contentment and connectedness means keeping dopamine in check. The riveting stories of her patient's suffering and redemption drive her narrative, and give us all hope for managing

ing our consumption and transforming our lives. In essence, *Dopamine Nation* shows that the secret to finding balance is combining the science of desire with the wisdom of recovery. Check out *Dopamine Nation* from HCPL today.

Work from home policy goes beyond pandemic

by **NICK BERNARD**
Times Staff

The following are brief reports of items discussed during a Jan. 13 meeting of Minden Hills council, held virtually.

Minden chief administrative officer and clerk Trisha McKibbin presented a report on the township's work from home policy, which had been submitted for review to the township's Emergency Control Group (ECG).

The ECG exists as part of the township's emergency response plan and is, according to the Minden's emergency response plan, responsible for the essential services needed to minimize the effects of the emergency on the municipality.

"This policy came out of ... the need for staff to be working at home during COVID-19, but this is a policy that goes beyond just when we're in a pandemic," McKibbin said. "It's a policy that can be used at all times when there's a need or a request for staff to work from home."

A number of changes had been made to the policy since it was last seen by council, which McKibbin walked through in her report.

Many of the changes were minute refinements on the existing text. One of the notable changes is that work at home arrangements must be approved by the CAO before it starts and is subject to being revoked at any time.

Changes to the equipment requirements for employees who work from home were changed as well, updated to require reliable telephone service as well as the existing requirement for reliable internet service, as staff are required to answer phone calls through the course of their duties.

A section was also included addressing a policy for employees who are injured during the course of their duties, making them eligible to apply for WSIB benefits even when they're working from home.

"It's a good policy for us to have because ... I do know that when we are out of this pandemic, there will be long-lasting changes to how we do business," McKibbin said.

"So this is a policy that's going to help us ensure that we have opportunities and options for staff."

McKibbin also said that the policy will continue to be reviewed and revised as required.

Council approves purchase for rapid attack fire truck

Minden Fire Chief Nelson Johnston presented the final cost for the fire department's new mini rapid attack fire truck, designated as R7.

R7 is a 2021 F550 4x4 mini pumper from Ford, with its purpose being to access terrain the larger trucks cannot.

"It is the largest pump in our fleet now," Johnston said, adding that while the truck is outfitted with the minimum amount of equipment required for certification, the department was able to make its own modifications to the build. LED lights were added to make the power system more efficient, and intake valves were added to fill the truck with water quickly, among other modifications.

The amount set aside for the truck was \$470,000, with R7's final build coming out at a cost of \$389,800.

Sayne joins climate action plan advisory group

Councillor Pam Sayne was the enthusiastic nominee to join the County of Haliburton's Community Climate Action Plan Advisory Group, representing Minden Hills at that table.

The advisory group's role will be to help and advise staff across the county in developing a climate action plan. The advisory group will review best practices, identify strategies for communities to reduce emissions, and help prepare municipalities for the direct impacts of climate change.

The next meeting of Minden council will take place virtually on Jan 27 beginning at 9 a.m. For more information visit minden-hills.ca.

Absence data replaces COVID-19 test data

from page 1

holidays.

In the Jan. 24 update, which includes information from the previous Friday, Archie Stouffer Elementary School in Minden was reporting a 20.9 per cent rate of absence. Cardiff Elementary School had reported a 57.9 per cent rate of absence, while Wilberforce Elementary School had a 54.4 per cent rate of absence. In Haliburton, Stuart Baker Elementary School was reporting 20.5 per cent of staff and students being absent, and J.Douglas Hodgson had a 16.9 per cent rate of absence.

"Schools are monitoring this data closely and when a school is close to the 30 per cent threshold of absences due to illness,

the board will work closely with our public health units to determine the next steps together," reads the Trillium Lakelands District School Board website. "Should the number of illnesses (either in students or staff, or both) be too high to maintain a healthy and safe school, a class or entire school will move to remote learning temporarily. If there is a situation where there are multiple staff absences due to illness, or the inability to fill those absences with occasional teachers, the school may need to close for a short period of time and asynchronous learning (without a live teacher) will be available but no remote learning will be offered. This information will be communicated with the school community."

As noted, absences might be unrelated to

COVID-19 spread.

"Therefore, in the case of Cardiff Elementary School, the school principal is communicating with the school superintendent and director of education daily with respect to absences, particularly the number of individuals who are absent due to illness," said Sinead Fegan, TLDSB communications officer. "At this time, there is no reason to close the school."

As of Jan. 21, 16 of the 4,844 schools in Ontario, or 0.33 per cent, were closed due to operational impacts of COVID-19.

Data is current as of 2 p.m. the previous business day and is updated by 10:30 a.m. excluding weekends and public holidays.

"Each day, the school principal, superintendent, and director of education are in communication with one another with respect to absences, particularly the number

of individuals who are absent due to illness," reads the TLDSB website. "If there are high levels of illnesses within a class, the superintendent and principal may jointly make the decision to move a class to remote learning for a short period of time. If a teacher is ill, the class will continue to be held in person at the school and a supply teacher will teach the class until the teacher is able to return. If the teacher is well but isolating due to a close contact, the class will continue to be held in person at the school and the class will receive instruction from their teacher who will join the class remotely. The class will be supervised."

All COVID-19 information and updates are available at tldsbc.ca/covid19.

Absence rates prior to January, or prior to the pandemic were not available at press time.

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Number of vaping violations getting high

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

The number of nicotine selling violations issued by the health unit rose steadily in 2021; a sign that the health unit will have to continue to focus on educating about the harmful impacts of smoking.

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge medical officer of health, Dr. Natalie Bocking, unveiled statistics at the Jan. 20 health board meeting, held virtually.

She said the two tobacco control officers employed by the health unit issued 352 "warnings" to local vendors in 2021, up from just 81 warnings in 2020.

Those warnings led to 31 actual charges in

2021, up from 10 charges in 2020.

This increase came despite the fact that those officers were redeployed to work in COVID-related programs for much of 2021.

"Most of the charges in 2021 were issues related to selling vaping products to underage youth," said Bocking, explaining that new legislation prohibits vendors from selling vaping products with certain levels of nicotine.

"There are tremendous harmful impacts associated with youth taking up vaping and often taking up smoking cigarettes after that," she said.

The health unit provides services for those trying to quit smoking. For details visit, hkpr.on.ca/my-health/quitting-smoking/

www.mindentimes.ca

Home Hardware supports a home for the arts

The Haliburton Highlands Arts Centre Foundation is one step closer to building a facility in Haliburton County, announcing its first Founding Corporate Sponsorship with Home Hardware Building Centre, which has locations in Haliburton and in Minden.

Dan and Emily Moulton, dealer-owners of Home Hardware Building Centre, have committed their company to the foundation with a donation of \$25,000 this year.

This significant donation will help fund important activities the HHACF has planned for 2022, including follow-up steps to the feasibility study being conducted by Janis A. Barlow & Associates. The study is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 2022, and the foundation will publicize the results.

"We are very pleased and committed to supporting the HHACF in its mission to build and operate a world-class performing arts centre in Haliburton County," said Dan and Emily Moulton in a statement. "We believe strongly in the economic impact that this project will bring to our region, and we would like to encourage all local companies and individuals to pledge their support in the coming year!"

"We are delighted to welcome Home Hardware as a Founding Sponsor for the HHACF in 2022," said Dan Manley, HHACF president. "Word of the foundation is spreading, but in these early stages, it's donations like this that take our fundraising campaign to the next level. We hope that fellow business owners share in Dan and Emily's economic vision for the Haliburton Highlands."

The HHACF launched its sponsorship campaign in November 2021, with the distribution of a flyer which outlines various levels of donations and recognition for individuals and local businesses. For further details on the foundation and its mission, as well as a complete list of supporters, visit www.hhartscentrefoundation.ca.

For further information on making a donation for your company, contact Dan Manley (daniel.manley@hhartscentrefoundation.ca), or sponsorship committee chair Drew Allen (drewmurrayallen@gmail.com).

- Staff



Home Hardware of Haliburton assistant store manager Nigel Milne, from left, Home Hardware Building Centre owner Dan Moulton and district general manager Glen Rickerby, and Haliburton Homeware assistant manager Paul Walker presented a \$25,000 cheque to the Haliburton Highlands Arts Centre Foundation president Daniel Manley, committee chair Drew Allen and director Michael Clipperton on Jan. 19 in Haliburton. /NICK BERNARD Staff

Elmslie to continue role as health board chair

by **STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to the Times

Kawartha Lakes councillor Doug Elmslie will continue to serve as chair of the Haliburton, Kawartha Pine Ridge District health unit board in 2022.

Members of the health unit's board voted on Jan. 20 to have Elmslie serve another year as chair, after serving in the role in 2021.

Meanwhile, Cobourg mayor and Northumberland County councillor John Henderson was also appointed to continue in his role as vice-chair of the board.

The health unit's board is made up of elected leaders in the three regions and holds monthly virtual meetings to make financial and management-related decisions that guide public health programs in the region. This now includes COVID-vaccine planning, but also nutrition, sexual health, oral health and workplace health programs, among others.



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It's showtime for Minden's Still Standing episode

by SUE TIFFIN
Editor

"After nearly 40 flood-free years, the township of Minden Hills has developed a flooding problem. But as the community digs out, they also deepen their commitment to one another."

So reads the description of an episode of CBC's *Still Standing* that focuses on Minden Hills and is airing next week on Feb. 2.

Still Standing features Jonny Harris, comedian and actor, as he travels across the country visiting small towns, meeting the residents there, and finding humour and oftentimes moments of joy in how they have persevered through setbacks in rural life.

While the pandemic paused the show during initial public health measures and restrictions, in June 2020, Minden council heard a presentation from story producer Shayla Howell and executive producer Anne Francis about how the filming could happen with protocols in place. Minden was of interest because of news stories about repeated flooding and the community's response to it after states of emergency due to severe flooding on the Gull River in 2013, 2017 and 2019.

"We've been to towns that have flooded before, but for a town that, I think the three floods over the last decade or so ..." Harris told the *Times*. "The first one sort of came out of the blue and it's been a bit relentless since then ... By the third time around, people knew what to do. The town purchased a sandbag filling machine, and you know, just sort of getting prepared for it and ready for the next time without hitting the road or heading for the highlands. That's pretty impressive. It's also a gorgeous area, it's going to look like a million bucks in the final cut."

Harris and the crew came to the area from Sept. 21 to 26, 2020, speaking with business owners, residents and visitors about what makes Minden stand out. Those featured include Emily Stonehouse, Suwan Khamduang of Suwan's Thai Cuisine, Brigitte Gall and Michael Bainbridge of The Occurrence, Shawn Chamberlin of the Dominion Hotel and Pub and Shawn Smandych and Plum Vicious of Minden Pride.

"Minden turned out to be a really strong episode," Harris told the *Times*. "The town is gorgeous, the story – you know, getting rocked three times over 10 years by these devastating floods. Something we see on our show time and time again is how these sort of devastating things end up, in a way, uniting people. People come together and make an effort to get over it. The fact that Minden's at a place now that you can kind of have a quick response to flooding – I don't know, is that a good thing or a bad thing, but it's an impressive thing, let's say."

Despite the restrictions in place in Ontario and throughout several provinces in Canada at the time, much like many of the towns the crew visits, *Still Standing* paused and then carried on.

"It was heartbreaking to have to put our production on hold," reads a statement on the *Still Standing* website. "But the safety of our crew and the incredible people we visit was paramount. After months of monitoring the situation and carefully re-imagining how we produce the show, we were proud to be able to recommence production with COVID-19 safety as our central focus."

Harris said Minden had been on producer's radar for awhile, and then became the first trip out for the crew during the pandemic because it was possible to drive to the area without having to go to airports or bring a crew onto airplanes to get here from Toronto. One restriction in place that differed from previous seasons is that the audience was smaller for a live comedy session at the end of the filming, in which Harris summed up and made connections between his experiences here.

"I remember it really sort of weighing on me," said Harris of the restrictions with limited capacity of audience. "And I turned on the TV a couple of nights later and Jimmy Fallon was on there doing jokes for, essentially, the crew. He tells a joke and you hear a smattering of people, who are kind of behind cameras and stuff, laughing. So I thought, if he can do that, maybe I can go out and ... you know, we've all got a little egg on our face, we've all got to eat a little dirt right now."

While in an interview, Harris makes a point to acknowledge each of the people he met with that are featured on the show, but he also acknowledged highlights of his experience in this area including being able to take to the Gull River himself.



Jonny Harris walks down Minden's Bobcaygeon Road during filming of an episode of *Still Standing* that features Minden and will be broadcast on CBC on Feb. 2./Photo by Chris Armstrong Photography

"Getting out there to enjoy the river, which is sort of the stem of the flooding issues, to get out there and enjoy it in the best possible way, to get out there with Claudia [Van Wijk], Canada's whitewater woman, and do some paddling down over the rapids was definitely a highlight," said Harris. "I've seen some of the footage, it's going to look amazing."

He also said meeting with Plum Vicious, who features at the Haliburton County Public Library's Drag Queen story-time during Minden Pride, was important.

"Drag Queen story hour, which is a phenomenon but mostly in larger cities around the world ... to speak with Shawn, and learn about his role in that, and sort of the Pride movement, seeing that move into small towns I think is really important, especially for young people growing up who are questioning these things and facing these issues," he said. "It's like, he said to me, kids can sort of go on their laptops or tablets, and you see RuPaul and you know this world is out there, and it's OK somewhere but I think bringing this stuff into small towns and giving kids the sense that it's OK there is very important."

"The idea that it's really been embraced by the community, it's not an upstart thing, it's something the town is looking to rally around I think is quite impressive," he added.

Speaking to issues of the town's flooding, and how to find humour in what has been an ongoing struggle, Harris said it is possible to acknowledge and celebrate efforts made during challenges and also find ways to find joy.

"I think laughter is medicine, and I think, you know, you need to give due diligence to the struggles that towns are facing and acknowledging them earnestly and respectfully," he said. "But I think the comedy comes out of a place ... comedy doesn't have to fly in the face of that acknowledgment. It's more about sort of celebrating the earnest efforts that people have made. Any town we go into, it never really has to be sort of saccharine or pandering, you're always going to find, in towns that are facing a struggle, earnest efforts that are commendable."

"As long as that's sort of first and foremost, that sort of acknowledgement and commendable effort, that's the cornerstone and then I think after that it's kind of easy to make a few jokes and have some fun," he said. "You can be saucy without being mean-spirited."

Harris said his time in Minden resulted in a show that celebrates the town and the people who live here.

"Everybody needs a reminder now," Harris said. "That's the cool thing about the show. There's so much commendable stuff that people do, or communities do and nothing ever – like who's ever going to get up and make a speech about what a great person you are? Maybe at your wedding, you know, your best man or woman might get up and acknowledge some of the cool things you've done, and maybe



Jonny Harris, who came to town in Sept. 2020 to film episodes for Minden's *Still Standing* episode, takes a moment to contemplate the Gull River. The episode focuses on the three floods Minden has experienced over the past decade, and how the community has come together to bail each other out. /Photo by Chris Armstrong Photography

when you retire, somebody gets up and says a few words, but largely it's not a huge part of our society for someone to give that acknowledgement or pat on the back, and this show is a good excuse to do just that."

The first six seasons of *Still Standing* saw the show visit more than 80 towns. The latest season sees Harris visiting Hope and Chemainus in B.C.; Middleton and Oxford in Nova Scotia; St. Laurent in Manitoba; Wakefield, Quebec, and Port Stanley, Warkworth, Fenelon Falls and Minden in Ontario.

The seventh season of *Still Standing* began Jan. 5. It airs on Wednesday nights at 8 p.m. on CBC, or can be watched on CBC Gem. Minden's episode airs on Feb. 2 and the episode featuring Fenelon Falls airs on March 23. An episode featuring Wilberforce is available to watch on CBC Gem in the show's fourth season. For more information visit <https://www.cbc.ca/television/stillstanding>.

Gelert newborn one of Minden's first babies of the year

by **SUE TIFFIN**
Editor

First, Jennifer Kim and Praveen Venugopal were welcomed to the community, and then they welcomed little Aran Kim Nair.

Aran was born on Jan. 10, making him the second Minden Hills resident born with the support of the Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft this month and one of the first babies of Haliburton County to be born in 2022.

Aran was expected on Jan. 17, but arrived on Jan. 10 instead.

"Right off the bat, I was told I would be late as a first-time mom, but he came out early," laughed Kim.

"My parents, her sister, they're staying with us helping us out," said Venugopal. "And for some reason, my mom had this mother's intuition. She's like, 'yep, I feel like this is the week.' [Jen's] sister was visiting us from France ... she was like, 'I hope the baby comes this week so I get at least two weeks with my nephew!'"

"So maybe that helped to push it along," laughed Kim.

Kim laughs now that Aran is safely in her arms, but the day he was born is a bit of a blur.

"It was a little nerve-racking," she said. "I have never experienced something like this."

It all started on Sunday night, the 9th, said Kim. She had gone to bed but around 11 p.m. she felt she couldn't sleep, when contractions began.

"I was feeling tired," she said. "I don't know if I was ready for the contractions yet. I was more expecting Braxton-Hicks contractions but that did not happen, because I progressed very quickly."

Venugopal said the pair thought contractions would start, and then more active labour would happen 24 hours or 48 hours later before they needed to go to the hospital.

"I was sleeping," he laughed. "I was like, 'yeah, it's OK, she'll be fine.' At 1:30, she was standing up and couldn't do much."

By 5 a.m., Kim was having contractions every five minutes and at 5:45 she called the midwives.

"She has a high tolerance for pain, but the way I saw her, I knew something was happening and was going to happen that day," said Venugopal.

While Kim was on the phone, Venugopal said he was packing snacks and water to go with their already-packed hospital bag, as well as sending 5 a.m. emails to his office.

At 7 a.m., they left for the hospital in Peterborough.

"Oh, that was a blur," laughed Kim. "It was an adventure that morning, but the drive was a blur."

"This was something I was afraid of, always," said Venugopal. "Was driving to Peterborough if there was a winter storm."

While it usually takes him an hour and 15 minutes to drive from their home in Gelert to the hospital, white-out conditions delayed the journey and it took an extra half an hour to get there.

"The only thing I was just like, keeping my fingers crossed," he said. "Like hopefully, Jen does not give birth in the car."

Kim and Venugopal moved to the area from Toronto soon after the pandemic began.

"I was born and raised in downtown Toronto," said Kim. "I've never lived in the country."

"I very much love the outdoors," said Venugopal. "I love camping, I love the neighbourhood. Jen, kudos to Jen, she's never been north of Bloor Street ... until she met me."

"He always says that," laughed Kim. "That I never lived until I met him."

Soon after the pandemic began in March 2020, the couple would drive to Algonquin Park for a hike or day trip. In May as the pandemic worsened in Ontario, restrictions involving large gatherings saw their reception cancelled. That's when they began driving around on the weekend to check out open houses, deciding to invest the money they saved on their reception in a property away from the city with the newfound opportunity to work from home.

"Our gut feeling was that the pandemic would last for a year or two at a minimum, so why not live outside of the city and see how we like it," said Venugopal. "Both of us, we are city-bred, we never knew what to expect. Let's just give it a shot, this is the best time you can give it a shot. You never know what the future holds."

"And we jumped right into the deep end," said Kim. "And we love it here. No regrets, definitely."

"Definitely," agrees Venugopal. "All the people we meet, people is what makes this place amazing. It's just great, com-



Aran Kim Nair gets a snuggle in with parents Jennifer Kim and Praveen Venugopal a little over a week after his Jan. 10 Peterborough birth. Aran is Minden's second baby of the year to be born with support of the Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft, and one of Haliburton County's first babies of 2022. /Photo by Eleanor Dobbins

ing from the city where you live in an apartment and hardly know your neighbour. And here, folks are so friendly, so helpful. That's probably the best thing I've encountered."

That helpfulness extended to the moment Aran was born, when midwife Vanessa Taylor, as well as doctors and nurses in Peterborough, helped the two tend to him after his birth.

"I think the only challenge we had is that we couldn't have family visits," said Venugopal, speaking of the experience of a new baby at a time of pandemic. "In our cultures, my background is Indian, and hers being Korean, family is a huge part when a baby's born, especially. You have your entire family at the hospital, a support structure, and this time around it was just me in the hospital. But to be honest, the medical professionals, they're just so helpful. We didn't feel like we were missing anything."

"They took good care of us," said Kim.

Kim gave a special shout-out to her sister Joanne and her in-laws, Venu and Chandrika, for their help and support at home.

In 2021, the Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft welcomed 127 babies: 63 boys and 64 girls.

"Our busiest month was April, when we welcomed 17 babies, and the busiest day was June 30 when there were three babies born," said Stephanie Simon, registered MSHB mid-

wife, who was also the midwife that attended the most deliveries in the past year.

Of the babies born in 2021 under the care of the local midwives, 46 babies were born at home and 81 in the hospital. Fifty of the babies were born to first-time parents and 77 babies were born to families with at least one older sibling.

Six names were used twice: Rowan, Liam, Lily, Avery, Hannah and Dax.

Earlier this month, the provincial government noted the top 10 baby names in Ontario for 2020. The top name for girls was Olivia, which has been in the top spot for 11 consecutive years. The top name for boys was Noah, for the second year in a row. This year, Isla, Theodore and Leo were also added to the list. The top 10 names for girls were: Olivia, Charlotte, Emma, Amelia, Sophia, Ava, Isla, Chloe, Evelyn and Mia. The top 10 names for boys were: Noah, Liam, Benjamin, Oliver, Jack, Lucas, Theodore, William, Ethan and Leo.

ServiceOntario's 5-in-1 Newborn Bundle service was updated last fall, making it easier for parents to register a birth. The service allows parents to apply for their child's birth certificate, Social Insurance Number, Canada Child Benefits (including the Ontario Child Benefit) and Education Savings Referral service through one application.

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Celebrating an active life

Above, Peter Brogden at 87 years young speaks with skiers who joined him for the 50th anniversary ski tour.

Left, outdoor enthusiast Peter Brogden at 87 years young celebrated his time skiing in the Highlands with a 50th anniversary ski tour on Wednesday, Jan. 19 at Glebe Park in Haliburton. There were 10 skiers who were led out by Brogden to the northern limit of the Peter Rabbit Loop before everyone broke off and chose their own routes. /DARREN LUM Staff

Huskies plan Feb. 5 return to the ice

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

The OJHL (Ontario Junior Hockey League) has announced that the season will resume Feb. 1, as the province transitions out of their modified Step Two of the Roadmap

to Reopen plan.

The league, which includes the Haliburton County Huskies, has also announced that the season has been extended to accommodate the rescheduled games. The new end-date for the 2021/2022 season will be April 7, with full fan capacity set to return on March 14. Current fan restrictions are set at 50 per cent or 500 people, whichever is less.

The Huskies, who last played on Jan. 2, will take to the ice on Feb. 4 against the Lindsay Muskies in Lindsay. Following that, they will head back to the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena less than 24-hours later to face off against the Wellington Dukes at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 5.

“The OJHL Board of Governors were unanimously in favour of extending the OJHL regular season to allow for our players to play the full 54-game season,” said OJHL Commissioner Marty Savoy in a press release. “When the provincial government

announced the shutdown, our teams immediately started the process with the league of rescheduling games in an effort to have as many scheduled once the league resumed play.”

During the off time, the Huskies have been keeping fit by working out in small groups and holding team skates on local lakes in the area, enduring the frigid conditions. Many of the players have stayed in the area, with some being called to play in the OHL (Ontario Hockey League) or play with teams in the United States.

The Huskies view this as a fresh start and are eager to get back on the ice.

“It’s exciting to get back on the ice,” head coach Ryan Ramsay said. “We were very nervous they were going to extend the lockdown again, but we are thankful to be back playing and the boys are chomping at the bit to get back at it.”

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HALIBURTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
A Community Futures Development Corporation

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!

Local Initiatives Program

Funding to support non-profit organizations with community economic development projects.

Apply online at www.haliburtoncdc.ca

APPLICATION DEADLINE
Submit proposals March 7, 2022 to receive feedback
Final applications due March 14, 2022

Canada



Skid School begins Feb. 5 and will run until March 5, pending any public health measure changes. The winter driving course offers an opportunity for both in-class sessions and on-the-track practice./ Photo submitted by Ian Law

Skid School prepares even longtime drivers for winter roads

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

Due to provincial guidelines in place during the fifth wave of the pandemic, Ian Law's Skid School has been forced to delay its upcoming Minden dates into early February. The school, which normally starts in January, has managed to run a few classes before the gathering restrictions, but the bulk of the course will be run post-restrictions.

The school is run by former CASC race driver Ian Law and his brother, and aims to teach everyone far and wide some integral winter driver skills not covered in the standard government issued driver exams.

"My background is competition driving," Law said. "When I started doing auto slalom I wanted to see the sport grow so I would approach lots of guys and tell them they should try it. These guys who would come out would often get their doors blown off by drivers in lesser cars who had more control. I started an auto slalom school back in the late 80s and helped these new drivers learn some techniques, and many of these guys were telling me they were using these car control tricks on the road in their everyday life. So after that we developed the car control school based on that and we added in an ice driving course as well."

Given Canada is a relatively cold country, it came as a shock to Law when he found out most government employees didn't know how to properly drive in icy conditions. It also shocked him to know that young drivers weren't being taught these essential skills, given the harsh northern winters that Canada sees - it was a no-brainer to add in a course solely based on ice driving.

However, one of the biggest hurdles of his course is that some think they don't need to take it. Some drivers on the road believe that everyone else is the problem and their driving is "perfectly fine," and that other drivers should take the course - not them. Nine times out of 10, once a driver does complete the course they realize how much skill they have lacked and how their driving has now improved.

"When we tell people about what we do, the reaction is almost always that they're good drivers and it's everyone else who needs that," Law continued. "Advertising doesn't work due to the attitude of the drivers, but we do get a lot of parents signing their teenagers up for it. I often will invite the parents to join the course, but they will always say they don't need it since they have been driving for 20 years. So usually some people who are willing to admit they don't know it all, complete the course and realize how much they didn't know."

Law wasn't really happy with how the Ministry of Transportation had administered their driving tests, and he set



out to change that. Since the MTO doesn't teach these skills in their driver courses most drivers aren't aware that they need to learn better car control. What is a little ironic, is that Law's biggest clients are corporate groups often sent by the government itself.

He has trained people from Health Canada, to the police, those who work for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and most ironically the MTO itself. These employees are often sent by the health and safety departments of these places, which means they are very receptive to the teachings.

"We talk about the human being a lot because the human being wasn't designed to move this fast," Law said. "Our brains and eyes weren't originally evolved to handle speeds to over 50 or 100 km/h and helping people understand their vision is important. What we do with our eyes is very important while driving and most people are designed to look low. We are also designed to look at threats, and that's important because people steer with their eyes. So we try to break it up between in-class and in-car in order to make it more digestible, and I think it helps people understand better."

With the winter seasons only getting harsher, the more people that take the course the better, for Law. He wants all drivers to be safe on the road no matter what, and by filling the gaps in the available training, he has found a lot of joy and pride in

“

When we tell people about what we do, the reaction is almost always that they're good drivers and it's everyone else who needs that.

— IAN LAW

”

it. The skid school will be back at the Minden Fairgrounds on February 5, and the final date of the season will be March 5 pending any public health measure changes.

For more information visit <https://carcontrolschool.com>.



GET TO KNOW THE HUSKIES: CHRISTIAN STEVENS

by ALEX GALLACHER
Special to the Times

Since being added to the Haliburton County Huskies roster back in October, Christian Stevens has become an impact player and a leader rather quickly. The Brooklin, Ontario forward has five goals and 18 assists in his 21 games played with the team so far, however Stevens is one of the many players to bring OHL (Ontario Hockey League) experience to the Huskies.

Having played hockey since he was very young, Stevens played his AAA career with the Whitby Wildcats being named captain of his under-16 AAA squad in 2017-18. Moving up the ladder at a steady pace, Stevens credits his grandfather as one of the people who helped him foster his love for the game.

"I started when I was about three or four

years old," Stevens said. "My grandfather really taught me a lot of stuff, I used to shoot on him with my mini-stick. He is the one who really got me into hockey, he helped build the backyard rink and took me to a lot of the practices and games."

Starting his junior career out in Whitby, Stevens laced up for the Huskies predecessor the Whitby Fury. Playing 80 games for the Fury, Stevens logged 11 goals and 32 assists for the team before moving up to join the OHL's North Bay Battalion. Joining the team shortly before COVID-19 ended the 2019-20 season early, Stevens laced up with the troops for 22 games that year and remained in the OHL before being sent to the Huskies last October.

The adjustment has been very smooth for Stevens, who has enjoyed the change of scenery.



Christian Stevens rushes the Cobourg Cougars' zone while on the forecheck in Ontario Junior Hockey League action from earlier in the 2021-22 season. Stevens has appreciated his experience in the Highlands, noting the strong fan support. /FILE DARREN LUM Staff



COUNTY OF HALIBURTON LAND DIVISION COMMITTEE NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 53(5)(a) of the Planning Act and Section 3, O.Reg. 197/96, as amended, that the following Applications for Consent have been submitted to the Haliburton County Land Division Committee, the consent granting authority in these matters.

AND FURTHER THAT An electronic meeting will be held February 14th, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. to consider these applications.

AND FURTHER THAT this meeting will be held through remote electronic participation in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended.

The media and the general public can view the Land Division Committee meeting webcast via the County of Haliburton YouTube channel which can be found on the County's website by searching the land division committee (<https://youtu.be/XsEe0YxOg6A>).

AND FURTHER THAT these Applications for Consent will be heard by the Land Division Committee:

1. File No. H-004/20 (AH)
Applicants: Barber and Ronchka
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 14, Concession 6, Geographic Township of Stanhope
Nature of the Application: Condition Change (reconveyance of Shore Road Allowance)
2. File No. H-029/21 (MH)
Applicants: Hewitt
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 3, Concession A, Geographic Township of Minden
Nature of the Application: New lot in the Village of Minden
3. File No. H-030/21 (MH)
Applicants: Bonis
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 3, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: New lot to separate two existing cottages onto separate lots
4. File No. H-031/21 (MH)
Applicants: Phillips
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 23, Concession 6, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: Lot addition to allow for a garage to be built
5. File No. H-001/22 (MH)
Applicant: Edwards
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 17, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: Right-of-way (lapsed Consent H-017/20)

Additional information regarding the above applications is available for public inspection electronically by request during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

If a person or public body that files an appeal of a decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent does not make written submissions to the Land Division Committee before it gives or refuses to give a provisional consent, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal may dismiss the appeal.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent, you must make a written request to the undersigned.

Dated at the Township of Minden Hills on January 20, 2022.

Michele Moore
Acting Secretary-Treasurer
Haliburton County Land Division Committee
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0
Telephone: (705) 286-1333
or 1-866-886-8815, Ext. 239
Fax: (705) 286-4829
E-mail: mmoore@haliburtoncounty.ca

"I was fortunate enough to play two years of junior hockey before joining the Battalion," Stevens said. "I was pretty familiar with most of the guys already, however coming down from the OHL the biggest difference is knowing your role on the team. In North Bay I was on the third/fourth line focusing on getting pucks in and just doing my job, but down here I'm able to focus more on scoring goals and winning games."

The experience from the OHL has helped Stevens become a better player. Despite his time in North Bay not going exactly as planned, he has taken many lessons away from those 22 games that he applied each night for the Huskies.

The Huskies have a very close relationship with the Battalion, which has allowed them to pick up some quality players from the OHL. OJHL co-wins leader Christian Cicigoi and recent defense acquisition Simon Rose were both Stevens' teammates on the 2019-20 Battalion roster. That combined with guys who he already knew from playing together with Nathan Porter, Patrick Saini and Isaac Sooklal on the Fury, he didn't have to go far to find his friends.

"It's been awesome to play with those guys here," continued Stevens. "Coach Ryan used to play with the GM of North Bay so they are very close. Having that good relationship has really helped us push to get some good players, I've definitely tried to give my input to get some of my other really close teammates to come to the team."

Stevens' leadership is often one of the things that he has been praised during his hockey career. Having been named an assistant captain almost immediately upon arrival in Haliburton County, is something that has carried with him throughout his hockey journey.

No matter which team he is on or how well the team is doing, Stevens plays his heart out every single night. To him each game is a playoff game, and his work ethic inspires many of the younger players who look up to guys like Stevens.

"Christian is a leader," said former Battalion teammate and current Huskies goalie Christian Cicigoi. "Everyone looks up to him and he plays hard. When a young guy sees an older guy work like that you

wanna be just like him. To have leadership like Christian's, is a huge asset to our team."

Having played in one of the rather small OHL markets, one of the biggest similarities between Minden and North Bay is the "small town" feeling. While North Bay is far bigger than Haliburton County, having grown up in the hustle and bustle of the Durham Region there was very little culture shock upon arriving in the county.

The one aspect of rural life that Stevens appreciated was how much Haliburton County supported and rallied around the team. Signing autographs and giving interviews are something he knew from the OHL, but never expected to follow him to the OJHL. The people here have made this experience one he will never forget, and is excited to continue that once the season resumes in February.

"When I would go to North Bay from Brooklin it was similar, but up here it's a lot quieter," added Stevens. "I love it here, my family has a cottage up here so I was up here a lot last summer. A few buddies of mine have cottages up here too, so I've been around the area for five or six years. I'm happy I made the move here, lots of fans in the arena and buzz around the town."

For Ramsay, adding Stevens to the roster was one of the easiest choices he ever made. Stevens brings a lot to the table.

"He is the most complete 200-pound player on our team," Ramsay said. "He is very responsible defensively, just as much as he is offensively. He is very skilled. He is a big boy who plays a heavy game. That works really well for us, as we like to play with the playoff mentality. He has been keeping fit up in North Bay during the lockdown and he is a very mature player so he is a very important part of our team moving down this stretch."

As the OJHL is mainly used as a stepping stone for junior players to advance their careers, Stevens will be going to school next year and taking advantage of his OHL package, which means he has a few years of his school paid for on behalf of the league.

He still plans on playing hockey. Most likely going to play in the OUA (Ontario University Athletics – university calibre of hockey), Stevens doesn't want to give hockey up just yet and wants to continue as long as he can.



Sightseeing at St. Nora Lake

Highlands residents Russ Duhaime, from left, wife Joan and friend Laurie O'Sullivan and her husband Tim (with the family dog strapped on his chest) look out across St. Nora Lake while snowshoeing on Tuesday, Jan. 18 at the Frost Centre trails in Algonquin Highlands. The group of friends spent much of the afternoon snowshoeing and went to the lookout of the St. Nora Lake by taking the Vista trail. There are 11 kilometres of stacked loop trails. Fees are by donation, which can be made at donation boxes and maps are available at the trailhead. However, the trail is signed and trail map signs are posted. See algonquinhighlands.ca for more information. /DARREN LUM Staff

Highlands residents Laurie O'Sullivan and her husband Tim look out across St. Nora Lake while snowshoeing.




Highlands resident Russ Duhaime snowshoes up a grade during a trip with his wife and friends



The Township of Minden Hills

SNOWSHOE

hikes!




"Snowshoe Snowdon"
Monday January 31st 1-3pm
Snowdon Park (meet in parking lot)

"Discover the Dahl"
Monday February 14th 1-3pm
Dahl Forest (meet in parking lot (on Geeza Rd))

"Wild Ways of White Water"
Monday February 28th 1-3pm
White Water Preserve (meet in parking lot off Horseshoe Lake Rd)

Cost: \$10 per hike

Pre-registration is required!!
Contact Elisha at eweiss@minderhills.ca



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GENERATIONS

January brings educational and tasty experiences to Hyland Crest

January 2022. It felt so good to add that heading when creating this month's calendar.

A new year brings with it new hope, new opportunities and new possibilities.

Which is exactly the focus we are shooting for - new experiences and a selection of new programs that will provide fresh experiences for our wonderful residents. Some of the new programs included, Top 30 Funniest New Year's Resolutions (this had all in stitches), and National Bird Day Migration. Shot in Portland, Oregon, this interactive video that was set to beautiful music showed thousands of migrating Vaux's Swifts. Surrounding this video, the Life Enrichment staff created a presentation including interesting facts, trivia on bird migration and finished it off with a bird-themed giant word search.

"Where in The World" was also a hit as we ditched the jet lag and enjoyed an engaging trip to five destinations around the globe. We saw vibrant photographs and clues that gradually revealed information about each location. Staff asked intriguing discussion questions and residents shared stories of their travel experiences or places

they would've loved to have visited.

In "Name That Instrument," our residents enjoyed an orchestral presentation of five different instruments. They learned their history and how they are made.

Some other highlights from this month were, Martin Luther King Day on Jan. 17. On this day we had an educational presentation on the life of Martin Luther King. This program was full of interesting facts and trivia and we had a great discussion time talking about the hardships all kinds of people have faced.

On Jan. 25, we celebrated Robbie Burns Day. At this program we read the lyrics of this renowned Scottish Poet and learned much about his life as well as the experiences that shaped him into eventually becoming the man voted as the "Greatest Scot" by the Scottish public in 2009.

COVID did not limit our ability to visit the zoo this month as we were able to take a virtual trip there from the comfort of our home! We were able to see all sorts of animals and learned many interesting facts about them. It sparked many memories that were shared amongst the group! It was so wonderful to see how much they enjoyed

this experience.

Last but certainly not least we had a blast in our baking classes this month and whipped up winter sugar cookies, nutty (Nutella) cinnamon rolls, German apple cake and red velvet pound cupcakes.

As I'm hoping you can see, it has not only

been an educational month full of new experiences but also a very, very yummy one.

Lindsay Lester
Life Enrichment Program Manager
Haliburton Highlands Health Services

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Gull River sunset

The skies turned pink on Jan. 17 as the sun set after a snow storm blanketed the area with at least 15 cm of snow in some areas. /Submitted photo

SUDOKU

		5	8	7	6			
				2				
							8	1
		4	6				1	
3	9							8
	6				8	7	3	
						4		
				8	2			5
6	1		3		4			

Level: Advanced





Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 20



2022 Municipal Election

Joint Compliance Audit Committee Members

The Corporations of the Township of Algonquin Highlands, the Township of Minden Hills, the Municipality of Dysart et al and the Municipality of Highlands East, are currently seeking interested applicants from professionals who are required to adhere to codes of standards of their profession, and other individuals with in depth knowledge of the campaign financing rules of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* for appointment to a **Joint Compliance Audit Committee**.

The Joint Compliance Audit Committee has full delegation of the authority in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, to address applications requesting an audit of a candidate's election campaign finances. This authority includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Review applications and grant or reject audit requests
- Where an audit is granted, appoint an auditor and review the audit report
- Where indicated, decide whether legal proceedings shall be commenced.

The Joint Compliance Audit Committee will consist of members appointed by each Council. Committee members must have the ability to understand and apply the election campaign finance provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and should be considered impartial with respect to their ability to fulfill their responsibilities. Preference shall be given to candidates that have applicable experience in accounting, law, law enforcement and academics from related fields.

Preferred Qualifications:

- (a) Accounting and audit – accountants or auditors with experience in preparing or auditing the financial statements of municipal candidates;
- (b) Academic – college or university professors with expertise in political science or local government administration;
- (c) Legal; and
- (d) Other individuals with knowledge of the campaign financing rules of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

Members of the public interested in serving on this Committee are asked to submit a resume, and covering letter, marked "Confidential" no later than Noon on January 28, 2022 to:

Robyn Rogers, Clerk
Corporation of the Municipality of Highlands East
2249 Loop Road, P.O. Box 295, Wilberforce, ON K0L 3C0

For further information, please contact Robyn Rogers, Clerk by email at rrogers@highlandseast.ca

*We thank all applicants for applying, but only the selected candidates will be contacted. Personal information and supporting material is collected and used in accordance with the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**.*

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HISTORY IN THE HIGHLANDS

Have you heard of Frederick W. Ollard?

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD had been made aware of him. In a letter penned on New Year's Eve in 1869 to David Barker, postmaster and member of a prominent family in Picton, Ontario, Sir John A. wrote:



ADELE ESPINA
History in the Highlands

"My dear David,
I have yours of the 29th about Ollard. The certificate of the two Doctors as to the state of his health shows that he is suffering much, but they neglected to speak as to the state of his mind. If he is insane he should be transferred to the Lunatic Asylum to be cured. I have asked for a Report on that subject.

Wishing you many happy

returns of the Season... " At the time of this letter, Frederick William Ollard was a recently bankrupted lawyer practicing in Picton.

Born in London, England in 1837, his travels would eventually lead him to Minden where both his legal and criminal career would end.

His troubles had started in London in 1855 when he was caught passing a forged cheque. He was tried at the Old Bailey and sentenced to a year in the notorious Clerkenwell prison.

After his release in December 1856, he immigrated to Canada.

However, a puzzling notice concerning him appeared in *The Era* in London, England in May 1857.

"DEATHS ... 7th Frederick Wm. Ollard, on his passage to Newfoundland, after three days' intense sickness. This is inserted by direction of the Captain, as no address of any of his friends was found."

Did Frederick ask the captain to make this announcement so that he could make a fresh start on this side of the ocean under a new name? Was he running from further prosecution?

Regardless of the circumstances, Frederick William Ollard appeared in Canada. No accounts of him have been found during his first years in Canada. In May 1865 according to the *Toronto Globe*, he was appointed as a notary public in Brockville. He also married that July.

He set up offices in Picton, then Ridgetown. He committed offences in both towns before the good folks of Minden put a stop to his criminal activities.

In April 1878, both the *Victoria Warder* and *The Canadian Post* in Lindsay published accounts of his trial:

"THE MINDEN POST OFFICE ROBBERY
OLLARD CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS IN THE PENITENTIARY

The trial of F.W. Ollard, charged with stealing from the Minden post office the sum of \$498, took place on Tuesday and Wednesday last before his Honour Judge Dean at the Court House. The prisoner is a man of about forty five years of age, of dark complexion, low in stature and thick set. His face is round and bears the marks of a life spent in dissipation. He is a man of more than ordinary ability but so far as we can learn he has for several years past been lost to all sense of right and honour through is dissolute habits.

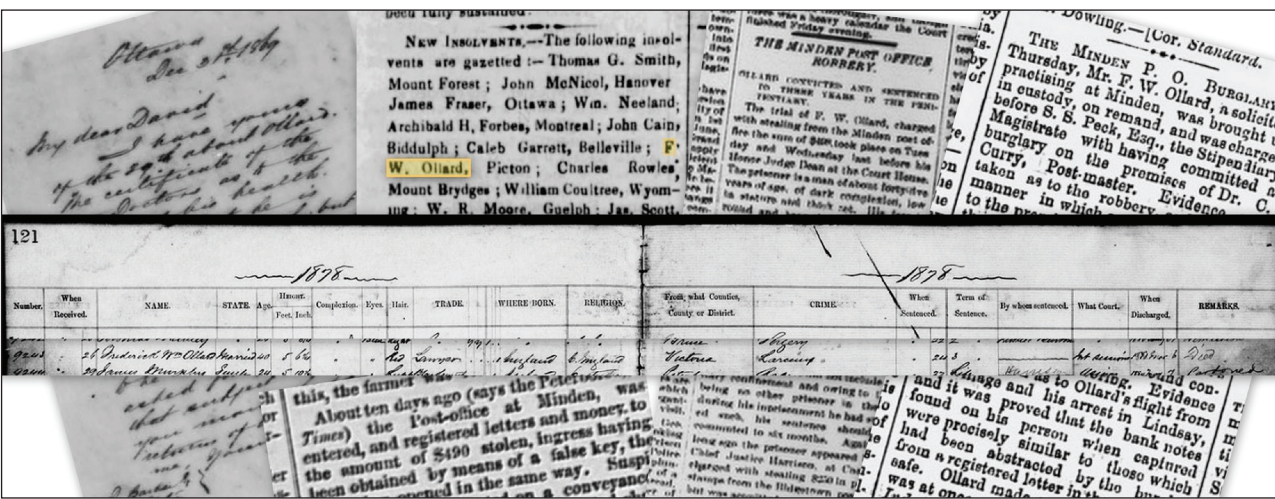
Some years ago he was convicted of theft and sentenced to one year's imprisonment in Picton jail, but by a clever piece of petitioning to the then Minister of Justice he had the period reduced to six months. His plea was that as his sentence did not include solitary confinement and owing to there being no other prisoner in the jail during his imprisonment he had suffered such, his sentence should be commuted to six months.

Again not long ago the prisoner appeared before Chief Justice Harrison, at Chatham, charged with stealing \$250 in postage stamps from the Ridgetown post office but was acquitted notwithstanding the strong impression of the Court as to his guilt, owing to bad management of the Crown prosecution.

Neither of these cases seems to have had any effect whatever in checking his dishonesty or improving his habits."

The amount of money that he stole may seem minor, but \$498 would be worth about \$14,000 today.

The account continued: "Ollard, the man charged with robbing the Minden post office of \$498, on this 10th of



March last, was before His Honour Judge Dean on Tuesday for examination. The chain of evidence seemed to show very conclusively that the prisoner became suddenly possessed of a large amount of money, larger a great deal than he could possibly earn by his profession during his short sojourn in Minden. At the time the prisoner went to Minden he was very hard up and shabbily dressed. His office was over Dr. Curry's drug store and post office, and he used often to be in the store and office where the safe was kept.

On the 25th of January last, Dr. Curry borrowed an overcoat from Mr. Pierce, merchant, to wear while he went to see Mr. Seaton who was drowned at Workman's mill, and as his shop was locked while he was away, it is presumed that he must have had his keys and locked the door himself on that particular day, as at the time he left, his brother who also carried a key of front door and safe, was at his tea.

It is therefore contended that Dr. Curry put his keys in the overcoat pocket, in fact he testified to having felt them about six miles from Minden. After coming home that evening he returned the coat to the owner, and the next person we find wearing it is Ollard, the Sunday after. The keys lost were belonging to the safe and front door of the shop; they were on a steel ring which also contained an American silver coin issued in the year 1796, and a check with Dr. Curry's name on.

After the robbery was discovered, a thorough examination of the premises was made to ascertain how the place was entered, and notwithstanding that the place had been banked all round with clay, no foot marks could be found. At once Dr. Curry suspected that the prisoner, when he borrowed the coat, found the keys in the pocket. What confirmed his suspicions that Ollard was the robber was that previous to the robbery he always complained of being hard up, but almost immediately after it had been committed, he had offered to purchase large promissory notes and cheques.

Mr. Tyner, a post office official, was at once sent from Toronto to work up the case, and soon gathered information which warranted him in suspecting the prisoner. Hearing that Ollard was about to leave

Minden for Peterboro', he went over to Kinmount and came on the same train with the prisoner to

Lindsay, and caused his arrest. When Mr. Tyner accused him of being the person who robbed the post office the prisoner appeared to be excited, and refused to show what money he had on his person, but, after some hesitation, he took from his breast pocket a large roll of bills, in all about \$427.

Mr. Armstrong, the hotel keeper at Minden, testified that Ollard gave him, in payment for liquor, the

American coin which was attached to the ring on which were the keys. Search was made in Ollard's office after his arrest and beneath the floor was found the keys of the safe and front door.

Mrs. Gainer testified that the three five dollar Federal Bank bills found in the prisoner's possession were placed in a letter by her and addressed to Mr. C.L. Baker, Lindsay. Her husband also testified to the bills and said he posted the letter and had it registered on the 16th of March.

The prisoner defended himself, and stated that Dr. Curry admitted to him that he lost the keys out of his overcoat pocket. He also stated that the American coin referred to in the evidence came into his possession in change, and that the keys must have been put under his floor through a crack

by someone else. Ollard said that at a former examination Dr. Curry stated that it was his custom to puncture bills coming into his possession, but of the whole pile of bills in his possession they failed to find holes in any of them after holding them up to the light. He contended that the charge had not been established, as they were unable to identify the money. He regretted that he was placed in such a position without good counsel to cross-examine the witness, and trusted to the consideration His Honour would give the matter. The prisoner, however, failed to give a satisfactory account of how the money came into his possession.

After reviewing the evidence His Honour deferred his decision until 11 o'clock on Wednesday.

On Wednesday His Honour said he was satisfied beyond a shadow of a doubt that the prisoner was the person who stole the money. He held that it was not absolutely necessary to identify the money so long as the facts surrounding the case were so well established.

The prisoner Ollard asked His Honour Judge Dean if he could not refer the matter to Chief Justice

Harrison, and cited a case, for which he was tried at Chatham, for stealing over \$200 worth of stamps from the post office, and Chief Justice Harrison ordered an acquittal on the ground that the stamps were not identified.

The County Attorney asked for the sentence of the Court and the prisoner received three years in the penitentiary at hard labour. The other indictments against the prisoner were withdrawn, and Mr. Devlin asked for an order to pay the money over to Dr. Curry.

The prisoner said he was only convicted of stealing \$45 of the money, but His Honour told him he had better let the matter drop, for if he was found guilty of stealing the registered letters, he would have to sentence him to at least seven years or upwards to the term of his natural life."

And so Frederick William Ollard was sent to Kingston Penitentiary where according to the register, he was received on April 25, described as a 40-year-old man, 5' 6 1/4", fresh faced, blue eyes, and red hair.

He didn't serve his full three-year sentence. On March 6, 1880 he died of a stroke in the penitentiary.

SUDOKU SOLUTION

1	2	5	8	7	6	3	4	9
8	4	3	1	2	9	5	7	6
9	7	6	5	4	3	2	8	1
7	8	4	6	3	5	9	1	2
3	9	2	4	1	7	6	5	8
5	6	1	2	9	8	7	3	4
2	5	8	7	6	1	4	9	3
4	3	7	9	8	2	1	6	5
6	1	9	3	5	4	8	2	7

AROUND THE COUNTY TOWN



Main street memories

Ted Brandon shared this photo of his sister, Allison [Brandon] Masters, who is being held by Sheila [Hogg] Austin, on Minden's main street. "Based on Allison's apparent age our guess is this was taken in 1954," said Ted. /Photo submitted

One dashing dog

Titan Fisher models his leisurewear in the snow. "His new jammies to keep him warm arrived today and he couldn't be any more handsome," said his people, Morgan Fisher, on Jan. 24. /Submitted by Morgan Fisher



WOODLANDS Wildlife Sanctuary

Meet George

Soaking up the sunshine after two days of bitter cold, this sweet young porcupine didn't grow back his one front tooth (that's all he wanted for Christmas) and is now a permanent resident at the sanctuary.

He was struck by a car several months ago and arrived with major contusions to the left side of his face. He has healed well except that he is now blind in his left eye and is forever missing his left incisor. He wouldn't survive in the wild on his own as he is unable to chew hard foods. We are happy to give him a forever home and provide him with a beautiful enclosure and a diet of mushy delights, which he thoroughly enjoys!

In a naming ceremony, the prickly boy chose his own name – with a little help – from a list com-

piled from ideas offered from Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary supporters on social media. Welcome, George!

Submitted by Monika Melichar



To see your loved ones on this page, send photos to sue@haliburtonpress.com



Sailor's delight

The sun sets on Horseshoe Lake on Jan. 17. /Photo by Sharon Foster

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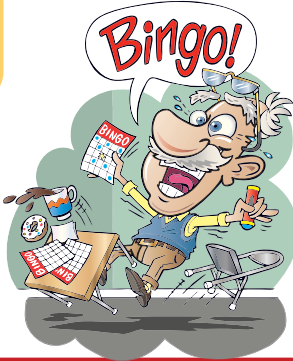
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In Loving Memory of

HILL, Barbara Anne

Peacefully at Ross Memorial Hospital, Lindsay with her husband at her side on Saturday January 22nd, 2022, in her 68th year.

Beloved wife of Kevin Hill of Burnt River. Loving mother of Russell (Krissy), and Michael. Dear grandmother of Austin, Colton, Derrick, and Alexa. Sister of Mary Anderson, Peter Dolman (Betty), and the late Patricia. In keeping with Barbara's wishes, cremation has taken place. Memorial donations to the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated by the family. To leave an on-line condolence, make a memorial donation or to share a story or photo please visit: www.jardinefuneralhome.com



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In Loving Memory of

Arlene Thomson

In loving memory of our Mother, Nanna, and Great Gramma who left us January 15, 2022.

*Sadly missed along life's way
Quietly remembered everyday
No longer in our life to share
But in our hearts she's always there.*

Predeceased by husband Douglas Thomson. Lovingly remembered by daughters Dale (Roy), Karen (Danielle), and Shelley (Luke), by 7 grandchildren, by 8 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. Dear sister of Marilyn O'Connor.


A private family interment will be held at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highland Health Services Foundation (H.H.H.S.F) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



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In Loving Memory of
W. Shawn Cooke
59.03.11 – 22.01.19


Shawn moved back to his original home 30 years ago. The Highlands were where he wanted to be. If you met him even once, he left a positive impression with you. Shawn was known for his humour and smooth charisma. He would fix small engines with no problem, he loved the sound of motors; have a conversation with anyone, ride his "pretty" ATV to his special places, boating at Hawk Lake and campfires at home. He enjoyed his job on Roads 6, 7 and 14; many people will miss their early morning wake up honks.

He was my special friend for 28 years and I will miss his loyal support and love. His daughter Kori and grandson Taylor were a major part of his life; they kept him on his toes. Taylor loved that he could be silly with Grumpa. Special thanks to; Brian/Sue, John/Marie, Bonnie/John, brother Lee, Ash, Susan, Jeff, Wayne, Brian, Laurie, Paul M, Al/Pen and Carl. He leaves behind very special friends from both the Highlands and the Dundas area, too many to mention.

He left to be with his mother Lil, sister Maureen, probably singing old country songs together; and fishing with Roy.

With Continued Love, your best friend Lori.

No Service is being planned at this time. Memorial donations can be made to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHSF) and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



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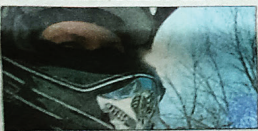
Checking for ID

Rosa Kim is among vendors who always check for ID when selling tobacco.
See page 3



Marvellous Mary

Mary Stiver is a woman who loves ice fishing. Even when she can't catch a fish.
See page 14



Happy trails

Taera Samis of Snowmobile TV takes a ride on the beautiful side.
See page 15



Going places

Snowshoeing can take you places ... like the top of the Stanhope Lookout Trail.
See page 21

In Quotes

"I'm not sure if that's part of the appeal or not, but I do know that by the time it's over even the Colonel wouldn't buy the drumsticks that are left over."

Steve Galea, page 7

OPP gets new home

by JERRY GROZELLE
Times staff

Morale among the staff members of the Haliburton Highlands Ontario Provincial Police Detachment got a boost with the announcement this week that a new police building is in their future. The Ontario Realty Corporation issued a request for proposals for a 9,900 square foot building to house the local detachment.

A press release from the office of Monte Quinter, Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister, said the Haliburton Highlands detachment in Minden is to be replaced with a new, larger and better-equipped facility.

"It is important that the police have well-equipped and well-maintained facilities as one of the tools to help them keep our communities safe and strong," said Kwinter. "This new modern facility will serve the local community well in the years to come."

The Haliburton Highlands facility was identified by the ministry as a priority, to address long-standing operational deficiencies and health and safety issues. When fully operational, the new facility will provide the detachment with significantly more space and greatly improved amenities.

"The new office will assist the Haliburton Highlands detachment in providing an efficient and effective police presence in the community. Our members are looking forward to the new office and to continuing our excellent relation-

see NEW page 8



Darren Lum/TIMES

Vessel of learning

Archie Stouffer Elementary School Grade 4 student Jordan Moore adds some detail to her vase. Moore was participating in the Clay Vessels activity at the school during the three-day series of Winter Electives occurring every Friday for Grade 1 - 8. More photos, page 9.

They've had it!

Break-in was the last straw for store owners who won't be selling cigarettes anymore

by JERRY GROZELLE
Times staff

Enough is enough. Smokers will no longer be able to buy cigarettes at the Kinmount Independent Grocer Foodtown.

A break-in at the store on January 26 was the last straw for owners Tom and Susan Lang. Thieves broke in through the front door of the store during the night and made off with about

\$3,500 worth of cigarettes and 30 DVDs from the rental service. The DVDs were all new releases and Tom Lang said they were valued at about \$50 each.

Lang doesn't think the break-in and the fact that the price of cigarettes went up a week earlier are coincidental.

"Cigarettes went up again just before that," he said, noting that it

see NO page 3

Recruit spouses, docs say

Teleconference reveals that's the best way to get new physicians

by SHERYL LOUCKS
Times staff

New doctors and residents say the best way to lure them to practice in rural Ontario is to recruit their spouses/partners.

This was the message delivered by a panel of medical students, residents, and new doctors during a recent teleconference. Haliburton Highlands Health Services' recruitment committee participated in the conference by using a new "telemedicine suite" at the Haliburton Hospital.

The suite is equipped with television screens, microphones, cameras, computers and equipment so that participants are able to see and talk to someone in another similarly equipped suite anywhere in the world. The conference was put on by North Network, a non-profit company linking dozens of doctors, hospitals and health professionals together. Beth Archibald, HHHS director of community health services, says they chose North Network because of the number of links it could provide.

This particular conference is a part of a series being broadcast on the network for community based recruiters. The conference linked up more than a dozen sites between Thunder Bay and Niagara. At the beginning of the conference, each site that had people listening were shown on the screen as someone in that suite introduced them. The joke in Haliburton was there were more people there than anywhere else.

Jesse Guscotte and Peter Holloway are two resident doc-

see PROFIT page 4

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